

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 1-59 are pending in the application. The Examiner additionally stated that claims 1-7, 9-10, 13-16, 18-26, 28-29, 32-35, 37-45, 47-48, 51-54, 56, and 59 are rejected and that claims 8, 11-12, 17, 27, 30-31, 36, 46, 49, 50, and 55 are objected to. By this amendment, claims 1-7, 20-26, 39-45, and 59 have been cancelled and claims 8-9, 15, 18-19, 27-28, 34, 37-38, 46-47, 52-53, and 55-58 have been amended. Hence, claims 8-19, 27-38, and 46-58 are pending in the application.

Applicant hereby requests further examination and reconsideration of the application, in view of the foregoing amendments.

Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)

The Examiner noted that a total of three IDSs have been filed. Two of the IDSs, filed on 7/24/2002 and 3/5/2004, were received with proper copies, and that the IDS filed on 10/21/2003 was received without copies of the references. Applicant herewith files an IDS along with transmittal letter and corresponding fee provided in 37 CFR 1.17(p). Copies of all IDS citations are provided as well.

In the Claims

Claim Objections

The Examiner noted that claims 52 and 55 are objected to because of the following informalities: Claims 52 and 55 improperly depend from claims 13 and 8, respectively, and they appear to properly depend from claims 51 and 46, respectively. Appropriate correction was required. By this amendment, Applicant has amended claim 52 to depend from claim 51 and has amended claim 55 to depend from claim 46. Accordingly, it is requested that the objections to claims 52 and 55 be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Examiner rejected claim 59 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter to

which Applicant regards as the invention. By this amendment, claim 59 has been cancelled, thereby rendering the Examiner's rejection moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objected to claims 8, 11, 12, 17, 27, 30, 31, 36, 46, 49, 50, and 55 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's characterizations of the rejected claims in view of the cited art however, for the purpose of expediting the patent application process in a manner consistent with the PTO's Patent Business Goals (PBG), 65 Fed. Reg. 54603 (September 8, 2000), Applicant has elected to cancel claims 1-7, 20-26, and 39-45. Applicant reserves the right and hereby gives notice of intent to pursue these canceled claims and traverse the rejection in a continuation application. Claims 8, 27, and 46 as now presented contain only those limitations of originally filed claims 8, 27, and 46, respectively. Therefore, this amendment does not narrow the scope of claims 8, 27, and 46 within the meaning of *Festo*. In addition, the elements and limitations common to these claim sets which render them allowable have been incorporated into independent claim 58.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16, 18, 20, 23, 25, 26, 28, 34, 35, 37, 39, 42, 44, 45, 47, 53, 54, 56, 58, and 59 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Muller et al. (US006483804B1) (hereinafter, Muller). Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections.

By this amendment, claims 1, 4, and 6-7 have been cancelled thereby rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

Claims 9 and 15 have been amended to depend from claim 8. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejections of claims 9 and 15 be withdrawn.

Claim 16 depends from claim 15, which has been amended to depend from claim 8. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 16.

Claim 18 has been amended to depend from claim 8. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejection of claim 18 be withdrawn.

By this amendment, claims 20, 23 and 25-26 have been cancelled thereby rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

Claims 28 and 34 have been amended to depend from claim 27. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejections of claims 28 and 34 be withdrawn.

Claim 35 depends from claim 34, which has been amended to depend from claim 27. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 35.

Claim 37 has been amended to depend from claim 27. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejections of claim 37 be withdrawn.

By this amendment, claims 39, 42 and 44-45 have been cancelled thereby rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

Claims 47 and 53 have been amended to depend from claim 46. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejections of claims 47 and 53 be withdrawn.

Claim 54 depends from claim 53, which has been amended to depend from claim 46. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 54.

Claim 56 has been amended to depend from claim 46. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejection of claim 56 be withdrawn.

Claim 58 has been amended to incorporate the elements and limitations which rendered claims 8, 27, and 46 allowable over the cited prior art. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 58 be withdrawn.

By this amendment, claim 59 has been cancelled, thereby rendering the Examiner's rejection moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 2, 3, 5, 19, 21, 22, 24, 38, 40, 41, 43, and 57 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muller. Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections.

By this amendment, claims 2, 3, and 5 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

Claim 19 has been amended to depend from claim 8, and adds further limitations over that subject matter which has been indicated as allowable over the prior art. It is therefore requested that the rejection of claim 19 be withdrawn.

By this amendment, claims 21, 22, and 24 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

Claim 38 has been amended to depend from claim 27, and adds further limitations over that subject matter which has been indicated as allowable over the prior art. It is therefore requested that the rejection of claim 38 be withdrawn.

By this amendment, claims 40, 41, and 43 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

Claim 57 has been amended to depend from claim 46, and adds further limitations over that subject matter which has been indicated as allowable over the prior art. It is therefore requested that the rejection of claim 57 be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 10, 13, 14, 29, 32, 33, 48, 51, and 52 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muller in view of Tzeng (US006438135B1). Applicant respectfully traverses.

By this amendment claim 9 has been amended to depend from claim 8, and adds further limitations over that subject matter which has been indicated as allowable over the prior art. Claims 10, 13, and 14 depend from claim 9, thus adding further limitations over that of claim 9. It is therefore requested that the rejections of claims 10, 13, and 14 be withdrawn.

By this amendment claim 28 has been amended to depend from claim 27, and adds further limitations over that subject matter which has been indicated as allowable over the prior art. Claims 29, 32, and 33 depend from claim 28, thus adding further limitations over that of claim 27. It is therefore requested that the rejections of claims 29, 32, and 33 be withdrawn.

By this amendment claim 47 has been amended to depend from claim 46, and adds further limitations over that subject matter which has been indicated as allowable over the prior art. Claims 48, 51, and 52 depend from claim 47, thus adding further limitations over that of claim 27. It is therefore requested that the rejections of claims 48, 51, and 52 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the arguments advanced above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 8-19, 27-38, and 46-58 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested, and allowance of the claims is solicited.

Applicant earnestly requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned practitioner by telephone if the Examiner has any questions or suggestions concerning this amendment, the application, or allowance of any claims thereof.

EXPRESS MAIL LABEL NUMBER: **EO 002 775 264 US**

DATE OF DEPOSIT: **10/4/2004**

I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service Express Mail Post Office to Addressee Service under 37 C.F.R. §1.10 on the date shown above and is addressed to Mail Stop 8-19, 27-38, and 46-58, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Respectfully submitted,
HUFFMAN PATENT GROUP, LLC

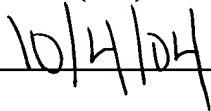
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